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SUBJECT Soviet Interrogation Methods

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1.Q. Intelligence Sections at all levels provide the MGB and the MVD with all data they have obtained. [redacted] only a document of identification accompanies the prisoner to the distribution point, where the MGB usually takes over. By what means, then, are the MGB and the MVD kept informed? Has there been any material change in this since World War II?

A. Information is sent regularly from the Intelligence section of the Army to the Intelligence section of the Army Group. The latter submits intelligence summaries every 24 hours, and positive or negative intelligence reports every two hours, to a number of standard distributees. Among them are the following:

- (a) Commander in Chief of the Army Group.
- (b) Several authorities on Politburo level.
- (c) Chief of the Political Directorate of the Army Group. (Always a military man. In 1943 this position in the Western Army Group was occupied by Major General Grigoryenko).

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- (d) Chief of the Operations Directorate of the Army Group. (A three-star general. General Malandin held this position in the Western Army Group in 1942).
- (e) Chief for the Counter-Intelligence Directorate (MGB) of the Army group. (In 1942, this position in the Western Army Group was held by a four-star general named Tsanova, today Minister of State Security, Byelorussian SSR). Intelligence reports and summaries made by the Army Group contain information on documents and intelligence obtained from the prisoners. The sources of the intelligence are always identified. Regardless of the level from where the prisoner is sent to the distribution point, the documents taken from him will always go to the Army group. A folder containing identifying data, a summary of personal information, an evaluation of the source, and a list of documents obtained, will be carried by the escort who takes the prisoner to the distribution point. The folder does not contain specific questionnaires, captured documents, or military information disclosed by the source.

When a source is turned over to the MGB, his exploitation on military matters is regarded as complete. Normally, this exploitation does not lead beyond the Army Group. Only extremely high-ranking prisoners with highly valuable information would be sent to Moscow for more detailed interrogation, if a maximum period of ten to fifteen days with the Intelligence section of the Army Group is insufficient for complete exploitation.

As long as a prisoner remains in the custody of Intelligence sections up to and including the Army Group, MGB as well as MVD interrogators can interrogate a prisoner only with the approval of the POW sub-section and in the presence of a representative of that section. After the prisoner leaves this military interrogation chain, he remains under MGB jurisdiction.

- 2.Q. Do MGB (or MVD) troop insignia correspond to those of MGB (or MVD) interrogators? Do the interrogators ever wear civilian clothes?
- A. Uniforms of MVD and MGB personnel are identical. In the field, interrogators never wear civilian clothes and never wore them during World War II. The fact that MVD and MGB uniforms are identical would explain why German prisoners mistook MGB personnel for MVD. [redacted] not familiar with conditions in permanent prison camps, and concede the possibility that MGB interrogators may sometimes wear civilian clothes there.
- 3.Q. Is it usual for a military interpreter to conduct interrogations alone, or do others participate?
- A. A military interpreter is usually alone when he conducts the initial interrogation for biographical data. He reports his findings to the chief of the POW sub-section who decides on the further course to be taken. The military interpreter must report whether or not he is able to extract information from the prisoner. If he is, he will normally stay with the prisoner until he has been fully exploited. If he cannot procure any information, a different military interpreter may take his place. If necessary, one or more specialists will attend the interrogation. More than one military interpreter may participate if the case is important enough. Occasionally, a newly assigned military interpreter may sit in for training purposes. In very important cases the Chief of the POW sub-section has been known to attend and direct an interrogation.

The Chief of the POW sub-section is the man who really decides what method is to be followed in any individual case. Theoretically, he merely makes recommendations to the Chief of the Intelligence Section who is his superior. Actually, however, his recommendations are equivalent to decisions.

There is no separate interrogation chain for members of the Air Force as distinguished from Army personnel. However, two or three military interpreters assigned to the POW sub-section have come from the Air Army and will represent Air Army interests, although their training in the Military Institute of Foreign Languages has been exactly the same as the training of other military interpreters. Copies of their reports are submitted to the Air Army as well as normal channels. Military interpreters representing the Air Army wear Air Force uniforms, although in war-time the uniforms have no distinguishing features. A prisoner could, however, recognize Air Force specialists by the color of their shoulder-board piping (blue).

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- 4.Q. How are military interpreters trained in interrogation methods after they arrive in a tactical unit?
- A. After the end of the second year of their school course which entails a twelve-hour daily schedule, military interpreters are taken to POW camps in order to sit in on interrogations and gain practical experience. After assignment to a tactical unit they are given check-lists of questions and asked to participate in interrogations conducted by experienced military interrogators. This is done for some time before they can independently conduct interrogations. Instructors in the language schools (Military Institute of Foreign Languages) are very carefully selected and in a majority of cases are non-Russians, usually originating in the country whose language they teach. In 1942-43 for instance, the head of the English department in the Institute was a woman who had spent twenty years of her life in the U.K.

- 5.Q. Are only military translators trained at the Institute of Foreign Languages at Moscow?

- A. A course for stenographers was instituted a few years ago. No details are known to me.

- 6.Q. Can a military translator ever strike a prisoner?

- A. The Chief of the Intelligence Section of an Army Group normally prohibits any physical contact between interrogators and interrogatees. Threats, on the other hand, may be used if practicable. One instance, however, when violence was used during World War II. A German fighter pilot, who was believed to have military information of vital importance, resisted Soviet interrogators for fifteen days. After torture methods had succeeded in breaking his resistance, he was not mistreated any further. This was an exceptional case and that as a rule physical violence would be avoided.

- 25X1 7.Q. On what levels, other than Army Group, are military translators assigned? What is the lowest level where a prisoner can be interrogated? (Answer to Question 1 in first report would indicate Division; answer to Question 2 mentions Regiment). Are there absolutely no interrogations, however brief, at company and battalion levels?

- 25X1 A. The lowest level where a military translator may be found is at Regimental Headquarters. Here, one military translator would be assigned to the PMSH-2 who is the Regimental Staff Officer in charge of intelligence matters. This military translator would have received the same training as a military translator on Army Group level. If a military translator is not available at a regiment, the PMSH-2 would help himself as best he could. In the majority of cases, however, a Regiment would have a military translator. On this level, the translator would be expected to obtain no more than the most rudimentary elements of military information. No interrogations take place below regimental level.

- 8.Q. How much do you remember of the contents of the Interrogator's Guide you mentioned in your answer to Question 14 in the first report? Does it deal with subjects or methods of interrogation? How is it organized? How long has it existed? Who issued it? It it ever reissued? Who can change it? Who gets a copy of it? What is its classification?

- A. The Interrogator's Guide is issued by the Main Intelligence Directorate. It came out first during the Russo-Finnish War and has been revised several times since then. I do not doubt that a late revision of the Guide takes into account current Russian-American relations, but I know no specific details. The Guide has the third highest Soviet security classification. It consists of about 35 printed pages. In wartime it would be issued down to Army level, although military translators on other levels would be familiar with its content. If a military translator would like to propose changes or additions, he would request this through channels. In peacetime, copies of the Guide would be held by the Intelligence Directorate of the Group of Forces and would not go below that level.

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The Guide is a handbook for all Military Services. Military translators will use it to brief themselves before interrogations, but they will not use it in the presence of prisoners. During an interrogation, a military translator could refer to handwritten notes. (See Enclosure (A): "Soviet Interrogation Aids").

9.Q. Are all prisoners, even those of little or no importance, sent to the Army Group detention point before reaching the distribution point? Are all prisoners interrogated at Army Group level? Are some prisoners sent to the distribution point from division level?

A. If an aircraft were shot down, the crew would normally be taken to the nearest headquarters for interrogation. This may be a regimental headquarters, or if geographic conditions make it preferable, any other headquarters, including that of an Army Group. Since geographic proximity is the primary factor, there is no standard procedure.

All Air Force personnel (officers and enlisted men) captured near the front lines are processed through the Intelligence section of Army Group headquarters, since only at this level are there military interpreters who are Air Force specialists. In this respect, there is no difference in the handling of officers and enlisted personnel.

If an aircraft were shot down in an inhabited area in the interior of the country, the crew would be picked up by the militia (MVD) and sent through militia channels to the nearest Military District headquarters. The Intelligence Section of a Military District headquarters is organized in the same way as that of an Army Group Headquarters, and military interpreters will be available to the Military District. Information would be sent directly to the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff in Moscow. The Army Group would have no interest in data obtained from an air crew of a plane shot down far behind its lines.

10.Q. About how long after capture does it take for an average prisoner to reach the permanent camp? How much time does he spend at each station? How long after capture does it take an "important" man to reach the Army Group?

A. It is impossible to give a definite time for processing. A prisoner without special knowledge may see his military interrogation completed in two days, while others with more knowledge may stay for a long time in the interrogation chain leading up to the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff.

11.Q. If a prisoner is sent to Moscow, who would interrogate him? Where would he be kept while in Moscow? Are there circumstances under which he might spend some time in a Moscow prison?

A. He would be interrogated by the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff. He would usually be quartered in a private home together with his interrogator. If it became necessary to break his resistance, he might be sent to a jail.

12.Q. If under wartime conditions a pilot is captured by an MGB unit in the interior, is he always turned over to the Intelligence section of the Military district (Voennyi Okrug) for interrogation? Does the Military District send him to the same distribution point where the Army Group (front) sends its prisoners? What does the Military District do with the information obtained?

A. If captured by the MGB or MVD a prisoner is always turned over to the Intelligence Section of the Military District. From there the information would be reported to the Main Intelligence Directorate in Moscow. The prisoner would go to a distribution point located either in the district or nearest to the district where capture has been made. ☐ not every district has a distribution or POW camp.

13.Q. Can you give more functional and organizational details on the Army Group section handling captured enemy documents? Is this a part of the Intelligence Section?

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- A. There is no organizational difference. However, a Military District not bordering on foreign-held territory would not have sections concerned with operation of agents and other military or semimilitary reconnaissance.
- 14.Q. If a recalcitrant interrogatee is persuaded to talk by promises of better treatment, food and quarters, and if such promises are always kept, what is the treatment of interrogatees who are cooperative to begin with? If it is true that the terminal camp is operated by the MGB, how can the interrogator insure a prisoner's well being? Will he actually threaten the prisoner with an MGB interrogation, especially when he knows that sooner or later the MGB will receive the individual anyhow?
- A. Recalcitrant prisoners will be threatened with MGB interrogations, and if they continue to refuse cooperation, will actually be turned over to the MGB which has means to make them talk. If the interrogatee decides to be cooperative, this fact will be entered into the record which goes with the prisoner to the MGB when he arrives at the distribution point. His ultimate treatment will depend on this evaluation by the interrogator.
- 15.Q. If the USSR fears liberation of important prisoners by parachutists, as you state in your answer to question 27 of the first report [redacted] where are they interrogated and held? Are high-ranking military men, for instance, never kept together?
- A. Prisoners are not separated by rank or importance while they remain in the military interrogation chain near the front lines. Such separation takes place after the MGB takes over.
- 16.Q. Do the Soviets have card files on foreign personnel?
- A. Personnel card files are kept by an Army Group, or in peacetime by the Intelligence Directorate of a Group of Forces, on personnel of the country or countries located in front of the Army Group or the Group of Forces. The card file is supervised by an order of battle expert and is considered very important. The order of battle expert must have special knowledge of enemy organizations and positions and a good memory. If the card file reveals that a prisoner has shown Communist tendencies in peacetime, it is probable that the prisoner will be recruited on the spot as an agent.
- Cards are filled out on all foreign personnel who at one time or another have been stationed in an area facing an Army Group or a Group of Forces. First, all such personnel are listed by units. Later, personnel cards are included in an alphabetical card file compiled at the highest level. (See also Enclosure B: "Soviet Files on Foreign Personnel")
- 17.Q. Are interrogatees never classified as general types?
- A. Military translators will come in and report whether a prisoner has impressed them favorably or unfavorably, whether or not he has cooperated and whether or not he has proved to be intelligent. Their findings, of course, influence the course of further treatment. Beyond that there is no type-casting in the military interrogation chain. Originally, an interrogatee may be regarded with suspicion if he comes from a "bourgeois" environment. His behavior, however, will be the main criterion for judgement.

[redacted] believe that the MGB does use a "type-casting" method, [redacted] what it is.

In any case, it is important for the prisoner to realize that his background may be known to his interrogator. To be caught lying may be far more harmful than to be identified as a "bourgeois".

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18.Q. Do interrogations take place more frequently during the night?

A. Military interrogations never take place at night time.

19.Q. Are prisoners ever asked to spy on one another?

A. Absolutely not.

20.Q. Must prisoners fill out written questionnaires?

A. Prisoners do not fill out any questionnaires. The military interpreter writes down their answers. Occasionally he may ask the prisoner to enter a name he cannot spell, which normally would be the only writing required of the prisoner.

21.Q. If an air crew is captured, how long would it take for the prisoners to be separated from one another?

A. The prisoners would be separated as soon as they are captured, or they would be strictly supervised and would not be allowed to talk to each other.

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Enclosure (A): Soviet Interrogation Aids

Enclosure (B): Soviet Files on Foreign Personnel

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Enclosure (A)

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Soviet Interrogation Aids

Military translators use the following printed matter in their work; technical dictionaries in foreign languages, general dictionaries in foreign languages, intelligence bulletins providing various data on foreign troops (organization, strength, armaments, etc.) and the Armed Forces Questionnaire for POW Interrogations (Obshchevoprosnoi voprosnik Po Voprosu Voennoplenikh).

The latter document contains some 400-500 questions of military and general significance relating to different branches of the armed forces, the artillery, air force, infantry, chemical troops, communications troops, engineering troops, cavalry, tank, and airborne troops. This questionnaire is compiled in one small book classified "Secret" and contains the following types of questions:

1. Personal background or autobiographical data, including the following:

- a. Last, first, and middle name and military grade.
- b. Time and place of birth (including the exact address).
- c. Family position (if married, a list of all family members - their ages, names, and exact home addresses).
- d. The exact designation of the POW's last unit.
- e. Membership in any political organizations.
- f. Other members of these political organizations known to the POW - their names and last home address as known to the POW.
- g. Any relatives the POW has abroad; if the answer is affirmative, their degree of relationship, any contact which the POW has had with them, the type of contact, and the addresses of these relatives.
- h. Training institutions in which the POW has received his education, the names of these institutions, first and last year of attendance, and the names of instructor personnel.
- i. Place of occupation prior to entrance into the Armed Forces, including the exact addresses of all employing firms from the time the individual first began working, until the time he entered the Armed Forces. The "time the individual first started working" means the time when he stopped attending school and first began working permanently.
- j. The service record of the POW. This question includes the following data: how and under what circumstances the POW entered the armed forces, the exact address and designation of the induction point, the military institutions in which he received his training, plus their address and full designation, the length of the training period, dates and authorization of all promotions, a list of all the military units in which the POW served, the positions held by the POW in each unit, the location of all of these units, and the exact dates on which the individual was assigned to and transferred from each of these units.
- k. Any relatives the POW may have; if answered in the affirmative, their names, addresses, and age.
- l. Whether the POW has ever been tried by any court. If so, by which court, on what charge, when, where, what sentence, and where the sentence was served (the location of the prison or other penal institution).

These biographical questions are followed by questions of a military and general character dealing with the Air POW's unit. These include:

1. The location of the POW's unit;
2. The type and number of aircraft with which his unit is equipped

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3. The organization of the POW's unit. (In order to answer this question, it is necessary to know the combat subdivisions of the unit and the main sections of the unit's headquarters as these are the main elements of the question; the other aspects of the question are of lesser importance.)
4. The number of pilots (or bomber crews) in the unit; the number of combat-ready and noncombat-ready pilots (or crews); in the case of the latter, the reason for noncombat readiness;
5. The tactical/technical specifications of the POW's aircraft. (This question includes the type of aircraft, the number of crew members, the aircraft's armaments, its bomb-load, maximum speed, ceiling, rate of climb, and range.)
6. The first, last, and middle name and military grade of the following personnel in the POW's unit: the commander of the unit, his deputies, the Chief of Staff, the commanders of the unit's subdivisions, and the officers in the unit operations and intelligence services;
7. The length of time the POW has been with this unit (this involves designating the approximate date of arrival in the unit and the location of its base at that time);
8. The location of the POW's unit prior to its arrival at the front; the date on which it arrived at the front;
9. The exact location of the unit's headquarters, POL depots, and ammunition and food storehouses which support the unit's combat operations;
10. The location of guard posts at his airfield (both day and night shift). This question may be asked in the following different forms:
- a. Can the POW describe the guard system at his airfield at night and in the daytime;
 - b. The location where flight personnel rest at night.
- (In order to obtain an answer to this question from the POW, he will be shown a map or chart of the airfield and asked to indicate this location.)
11. The call sign and wave length used by his unit;
12. Any personal indexes or call signs belonging to members of his unit which the POW can remember;
13. How the unit was briefed for the operation (i.e., the one on which the POW was captured). In answering this question, the POW will have to indicate the method by which he first learned of the operation, the time when he first learned of it, and the consequent procedure followed in preparing the combat flight.
14. How radio contact was made in the POW's group (while airborne, how was it made with the airfield from which they departed, and how with intermediary airfields along their course);
15. The larger unit of which the POW's unit is a part, and the location of the headquarters of the larger unit;
16. What other units are a part of the larger unit, their full designation and base location;
17. The type of aircraft with which the other units are equipped;
18. The first, last, and middle names and military grades of the commanders of other units belonging to the larger unit, as well as the key personnel known to the POW;
19. The full name and the grade of the commander of the larger unit, his deputies, chief of staff and other key personnel;

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20. The length of time the POW's unit has been a part of the larger unit;
21. Anything the POW knows about the flight personnel's morale in his unit and its sister unit;
22. The attitude of the local populace toward the military personnel of the POW's unit, and vice versa. This question is asked of the POW only if his unit is located in occupied territory.
23. Other airfields on the same front with which he is familiar;
24. The method by which the POW found out about these airfields, and who is based on them at the present time;
25. Any information the POW may have on the location of dummy airfields on the same front;
26. The source of flight personnel replacements for the POW's unit, and the frequency with which replacements are made;
27. Number of pilots (crews) lost in the POW's unit during the last month;
28. The organization of the airfield's antiaircraft defense in the POW's unit;
29. The source of aircraft replacements for the POW's unit;
30. Whether the POW's unit has engaged in any joint operations with other types of aviation. If the answer is yes - when, against what objectives, from what assembly point, and what formation was used on the way to and over the target area;
31. The type of aircraft with which the other unit was equipped;
32. The home base of the other unit;
33. What camouflaging equipment is located on the POW's base;
34. The location of aircraft at the POW's airfield when the unit is not conducting any combat operations;
35. The airfield ground defense system of the POW's unit;
36. The airfield antichemical defense system of the POW's unit;
37. What the POW was required to do with his aircraft in the event of a forced landing on enemy territory;
38. What methods of evading capture the POW was taught;
39. Anything the prisoner knows about any large operations planned in the near future;
40. What special recognition marks the aircraft of the POW's unit have to identify the unit itself or the superior unit;
41. What the recognition marks were on the aircraft of the unit which engaged in joint operations with the POW's unit;
42. How the system of control and direction over aircraft and groups during combat operations was organized. (This question entails an explanation of how the POW's unit was controlled and directed during combat missions).
43. How and by whose orders aircraft are summoned to the battlefield;

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44. What escape and evasion aids a pilot (or crew) is supposed to have. (Such objects can include compasses, maps, ration kits, watches, etc.);

45. Whether there are any provisions for a pilot (or crew) in Soviet-controlled territory to establish contact with diversionary groups or other individuals who will aid him in rejoining his own forces. If the answer is affirmative, the POW will be asked what signal he was supposed to use when establishing contact with a diversionary group or other individuals, and what answering signal he was supposed to receive.

All questions listed above are found in the Armed Forces questionnaire for POW interrogation. Approximately 100 of the questions in the questionnaire will deal with Air Force POW's.

Without attempting to describe the significance of all questions, I should like to point out that on the basis of the answers given by a POW, it is possible to ascertain with what overall subjects he is familiar. Once this has been done, the POW can be interrogated in detail on anything he has given.

All questions in the Armed Forces questionnaire relating to the different types of information are general in nature. Specific questions on various airfields are contained in a special military airfield questionnaire which is kept at the headquarters of Air Armies and in the main headquarters of the Military Air Forces.

It must be remembered that POW interrogations on any special technical subject are conducted in the presence of a specialist, who may formulate his questions on the basis of each answer. The military interpreter has no specialized training in any field pertaining to any one service; his training is general, and covers the armed forces as a whole. Thus, he can have no more than a general comprehension of various technical aspects.

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Enclosure (B)

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SOVIET FILES ON FOREIGN PERSONNEL

The reconnaissance section of a Military District (or Army Group) maintains special folders and a card file on each foreign officer serving in a unit located opposite its troops. If the territory of the Military District adjoins the border of a small foreign nation, the Intelligence section of the Military District will maintain a card file and dossiers on all officers of all units in that country.

This card file has the following appearance: A small card (approximately 4 by 5 inches) is maintained for each officer. This card gives the officer's first and last name, military grade, duty position, unit designation, place and time of birth, education, and previous assignment. It also gives his dossier and folder number.

In addition to the card file, a separate dossier is maintained for each officer. The dossier includes all data given above and the following additional information: height, weight, description of personal appearance, attitude and/or political opinion, positive and negative qualities, date of promotion to present military rank, personal likes and dislikes, the type of associates, special characteristics, episodes from his life, and a series of other data which source cannot recall.

The card file is located in specially designed little boxes, each divided into sections with one section for each unit. All cards on officers from a given unit are filed in strict alphabetical order (using the Russian alphabet) in their unit's section of the box.

A separate box is kept for cards on officers about whom nothing is known at present, and retired officers. The cards in this box are kept in strict alphabetical order. If the Intelligence Section of a Military District has ascertained that an officer has left his unit but his destination is unknown, his card will be removed from his unit's section of the card file and placed in the general section of the card file until his destination is determined. Eventually, his card will be filed alphabetically with his new unit. His personal dossier will be removed from his unit's folder and placed in the general folder.

Such cards and dossiers are also kept in the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR, and are filed in the same manner as in the Intelligence Section. All newly obtained information about any officer is entered into the officer's dossier and a copy of this is sent to the Main Intelligence Directorate where the information is entered on the officer's dossier in the same way as at the Intelligence Section of the Military District.

In the event that a whole unit is moved to a sector which adjoins another Military District, the complete card file and all dossiers on the unit's officers are sent to the Intelligence Section of the Military District opposite which the unit is now located, according to information received from Moscow.

The Intelligence Section responsible for the sector to which the unit is moved will receive data on the unit prior to its arrival there, since all Intelligence sections of Military Districts continually exchange information among themselves. All intelligence summaries, radio-intelligence summaries, agents' reports and intelligence information obtained in other ways are summarized at specified times and disseminated to all distributees of information from the Intelligence Section of the Military District, including: The Intelligence Section of the Army located in the same Military District, and the Chiefs of Directorates in the Military District. Some of the information - such as the radio-intelligence summary - is also sent to the Central Committee of the Party of the Republic where the Military District is located. It is addressed personally to the following individuals: the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party, the Republic's Minister of State Security, and the Republic's Minister of Internal Affairs.

Thus, it is apparent that all Intelligence Sections of Military Districts are in possession of all required information about enemy units in the other Military Districts.

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It should also be pointed out that the Military District's agents collect data and maintain dossiers on various important officials of the police and other organs of the local government. Dossiers and cards are maintained on these individuals in the same manner as on enemy officers. The cards contain current information and biographical data and include samples of the subject's signatures.

In addition to the card file and personal dossiers, the Intelligence Section of the Military District maintains a typed, general list (compiled in alphabetical order) of all known officers in the territory adjoining the Military District, regardless of the foreign government they represent. Furthermore, separate lists of people in various administrative positions in the local government organs, people who are politically active in behalf of the Soviet Union, and those who are active against the Soviet Union, are kept by the Intelligence Section. "Politically active in behalf of the Soviet Union" designates members of the Communist Party and its front organizations; "active against the Soviet Union" designates members of organizations which do not support the Communist Party and object to Communism. With each name, the lists carry a notation referring to the location of the individual's dossier and card. If an individual's card and dossier are moved from one file to another, the change is noted on the list.

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